



Habitats

interior rivers and streams; natural lakes and prairie marshes

Iowa Status

common; native

Iowa Range

northern two-thirds of Iowa

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.

brook stickleback

Culaea inconstans

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|------------------|------------------------|
| Kingdom: | Animalia |
| Division/Phylum: | Chordata - vertebrates |
| Class: | Osteichthyes |
| Order: | Gasterosteiformes |
| Family: | Gasterosteidae |

Features

The brook stickleback grows to two or three inches long. It lacks scales. There are four to six spines along the back and one spine in the pelvic fin. The body is green to brown on the back, silver on the sides, and silvery to light green on the belly. The sides may have yellow spots. The breeding male is dark green to black.

Natural History

The brook stickleback lives in creeks and rivers. It prefers areas with plants and a mud or sand bottom. It eats invertebrates and algae. It spawns in late spring and early summer. The male builds a nest from vegetation, which is held together by sticky secretions from his kidney. There is an opening on only one side of the nest. The male courts the female to enter the nest and deposit eggs. When egg-laying is completed the male enters the nest and releases sperm. Eggs hatch in seven to 11 days. The male guards the eggs and young.